

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. Status of Claims

- Claims 1 and 16 are Independent Claims.
- Claims 1 and 16 are currently amended.
- Claims 1-10, 12-24, and 26-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Bommareddy et al (US Pat. No. 6,880,089) (hereinafter referred to as **Bommareddy**).
- Claims 11 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Bommareddy** in view of Bunker, V et al. (US Publ. No. 2003/0028803) (hereinafter referred to as **Bunker, V**).

II. Examiner Interview Summary

Applicants and their agent expressly thank Examiner and her supervisor for taking their time to meet Applicants and their agent and conduct an Examiner Interview at 3:00 PM on Thursday, September 11, 2008. Applicant Arun Sood (via phone), Agent David Yee, Examiner Shewaye Gelagay, and Supervisor Emmanuel Moise were present.

To summarize the interview, Applicants described the differences between **Bommareddy** and Applicants' claimed invention. Particularly, Applicants explained that **Bommareddy** actively looks for/detects firewall failures by monitoring the operational health of routers. Once a failure is detected, then and only then would **Bommareddy**'s firewall clustering system acts.

In addition, Applicants explained that their system is different from Bommareddy because Applicants' self-cleansing mechanism enters into an automatic cleansing process by automatically cleansing at least one subsystem (e.g., a firewall, server, gateway, etc.) on a cyclically and/or randomly timed-basis. Furthermore, these self-cleansing activities will occur

automatically cleansing a system without having the need to first detect a failure. **Bommareddy** does not teach any of these features. Hence, as a response, Applicants proposed to amend Independent Claims 1 and 16 to reflect automatic cleansing, a technique not taught in **Bommareddy**.

Examiner stated that these amendments overcome **Bommareddy**. However, a further search would have to be conducted.

III. Response

A. Amended Independent Claims 1 and 16 overcome Bommareddy.

Based on the September 11, 2008 Examiner Interview, the arguments made and the claim amendments overcome **Bommareddy**. See supra § II; see also supra **Amendments to the Claims**. Support for the amendments to Claims 1 and 16 can be found in the Abstract, Figures 1-5 of the Specification, and paragraphs [0022]-[0024], [0038], [0040], and [0047] of the Specification.

With **Bommareddy** overcome, Applicants respectfully request Examiner to withdraw the § 102(e) rejections. If Examiner's next prior art search does not result in any prior art that can be used to reject the amended claims, Applicants believe the amended independent claims and all their dependent claims would be in condition for allowance.

B. Because Bommareddy is overcome, Bommareddy cannot be combined with Bunker, V to reject Dependent Claims 11 and 25.

With **Bommareddy** now overcome, the § 103(a) rejections for Dependent Claims 11 and 25 fall apart because Dependent Claim 11 is dependent upon Independent Claim 1 and Dependent Claim 25 is dependent upon Independent Claim 16.

Hence, Applicants also respectfully request Examiner to withdraw the § 103(a) rejections.

IV. Deposit Account

Applicants hereby authorize the Commissioner to credit or debit any outstanding fees in connection with this patent application using Deposit Account No. 50-3212.

Respectfully submitted,

/David Yee, Reg. No. 55,753/
David Yee, Registration No. 55,753

Office of Technology Transfer
George Mason University
4400 University Dr., MSN5G5
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703-993-3949
Fax: 703-993-9710

Filed: September 12, 2008